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ABSTRACT

This practical guide to developing and writing charters was prepared for New Zealand's early childhood educators. Charters differ from licenses. In order to become licensed, early childhood groups must demonstrate that they have fulfilled a number of minimum standards. But in order to receive a charter, licensed, operating, and registered groups must show that they are planning to improve or are continuing to meet specific criteria in the areas of early childhood management and curriculum. Personnel can use this guide in conjunction with the Early Childhood Management Handbook in order to: (1) work toward meeting minimum standards for licensing; (2) assemble information needed to write charter documents; (3) improve consultations with staff, parents, and community; and (4) make decisions about organizing the staff and center, drawing up a budget, and establishing a basis for evaluating center programs and processes. Other topics covered in the guide include the new structure for education in New Zealand; the case for early childhood education; objectives; the process of moving from license to charter; the process of settling differences; and the process of writing the charter document. Appendix 1 provides policy statements from the New Zealand Childcare Association, while Appendix 2 lists resources and books. (RH)

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The Useful Charter Book for Early Childhood Centres and Groups

He Pukapuka Whakahaere

A practical guide to developing and writing charters

The Early Childhood Development Unit: July 1990

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by Caryl Hamer

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Introduction

The **"The Useful Charter Book for Early Childhood Centres and Groups"** has been designed to be useful for all the phases of charter development and review.

You can use it alongside your Early Childhood Management Handbook:

- ☐ To work towards meeting minimum standards for licensing
- ☐ To get together the information you will need to write your charter document
- ☐ As a guide to consulting with staff, parents and community
- ☐ To make decisions on how to organise your staff and centre effectively.
- ☐ To draw up your budget
- ☐ To give a base for evaluating and reviewing your centre programme and processes

Here's how to use **"The Useful Book"**

1 Read through each section in turn

2 Find out the information required.

3 Use the Licensing and Charter Process charts (**Bold Surrounds**, numbered 1 - 10) at the end of each section to organise and check the information you have. This will help you to develop and later to review your licensing procedures and your charter document.

4 Perhaps file the appropriate information together with each Licensing and Charter Process chart so that it is readily available for evaluation when required.

5 Some pages have been designed for photocopying .
You may like to use them as discussion topics or for future reference.

You mav even use this book as a source of important contact addresses that you fill in as you work through it.

Can some sections be skipped?

If you want to. But read it through first to make sure you know what is there.

The book is designed to make the charter writing and any future revising task, as simple as possible.

It includes useful consultation advice and processes as well as ideas for resolution of differences of opinion.

A further aim is to provide centres and groups with important information about their centre and the way it functions. This could be useful for future reference or as a check that all requirements have been covered.

Each section can also be also used separately to look at different aspects of the charter requirements.

What happens if there are conflicting points of view?

The process used in this book is built on an understanding of the early childhood situation where there are often different and sometimes conflicting ideas on how the centre and the programme should be organised.

By looking at the practice first, and then at the underlying aims and objectives, it is easier to see **why** staff and parents think as they do.

This is an essential step to resolving conflict - understanding the reasons behind the actions.

It won't always work like that

No, it won't. There will always be differences, sometimes conflict.

☐ The person or persons with responsibility for organising the centre -(it may be the centre owner, administrator or supervisor) may want to take a final decision which does not meet everyone's wishes.

☐ The centre may belong to an organisation or church which has a policy on matters of the centre curriculum or organisation not all of which are accepted by all centre users.

☐ The time involved in working through many different points of view may seem too much for busy adults, staff and parents to cope with.

Using this book allows these feelings to be recognised. Questions such as "Who makes the final decision?", "What if no-one cares - but they still complain afterwards!" and "Who can change the rules?" are discussed in the chapter on settling differences of opinion.

What if it doesn't work?

You should call in outside help. If you belong to a national group (umbrella organisation) their help and advice should be sought. The Early Childhood Development Unit has been specifically set up to help early childhood centres and groups and you may call on them at any time.

What about after the charter has been negotiated?

The really useful thing about this book is that it should go on being useful after the charter negotiation process has been completed.

It could give centres a quick reference to addresses of support services and checklists on requirements etc which can be used to carry out reviews of the centre and programme on a regular basis. (NB Local names and addresses can be added in appropriate places.)

It also provides evaluation guides.

Use the strategies for identifying the important things about your service.

Use the strategies regularly for discussing with parents and staff the strengths of your centre and areas for future change and development.

This book concentrates on the task of charter development and should be used alongside your Early Childhood Management Handbook.

It does not deal with everyday management. Help with these issues is always available through your local Early Childhood Development Unit District Office.

Centres and groups who are members of national bodies (umbrella organisations) also have direct access to their own advisers as well as various handbooks and other relevant material, (See Appendix 2).

Working through the book

The sections follow a pattern. The pattern is designed to take a centre or group through the requirements from initial setting up, to gaining of a licence and on to obtaining and maintaining a charter. Work through in sequence or choose the sections which are most relevant to your needs at a particular time. The underlined parts tell you who needs to be involved in the process.

Getting information (best done by management or a specific task group)

* Information about the administrative system for education

Consulting - getting advice and ideas
(will need to be done involving all members although perhaps organised by a small group)

* The consultation process - looking at early childhood needs and objectives in relation to your own centre and group

Getting and organising information
(another management or task group function)

* Information on the licensing and charter requirements
* Budgeting and developing a management plan
* Writing up the Charter

The consultation process - settling differences of opinion
(again a process in which all members of your group must participate)

* Evaluating and reviewing your centre or group (must include everybody at different times) particularly new members who come to join your group.

1 The New Structure for Education

Four new education agencies were established in October 1989 to replace the Department of Education:

The Early Childhood Development Unit,
The Ministry of Education,
The Special Education Service *and*
The Education Review Office.

An additional agency called the Parent Advocacy Council has also been established.

This chapter has:

A brief outline of the new educational administration structures

An overview of the role of each of the agencies involved with space to add names and addresses

Educational agencies in New Zealand have a commitment to the principles of partnership and biculturalism under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Each agency has a national and district or regional offices.

The New Educational Structure

Support Agencies

Early Childhood Development Unit (ECDU)

* Undertakes Community Development and Family Support
* Provides Advice and Support to Funded Playgroups and Pacific Island Language Groups
* Will give Advisory Support for Licensed or Chartered Early Childhood services
* Provides Training for staff, management and parents involved in early childhood services
* Forwards Advice to Minister and Ministry of Education

Special Education Service (SES)

* Provides advice guidance and support on children with special developmental needs
* Assists centre staff with programmes and planning for children with special developmental needs
* Makes recommendations to the Ministry for the provision of additional resources for children with special developmental needs
* Forwards Advice to Minister and Ministry of Education

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Parent Advocacy Council (PAC)

* Provides support for parents who are worried about some aspect of the education system.

* Listens to parents, informs them of their rights, and, if necessary, supports them through the correct channels.

* Has the power, if problems do not get resolved, to consider matters in a more formal way.

* The Parent Advocacy Council toll free line is **0800 656 582**

Administration Agencies

Ministry of Education (Ministry)

* Develops standards and policies for licensing early childhood centres, groups and home based schemes
* Approves licences for early childhood centres
* Negotiates and approves charters for centres, groups and home based schemes as a prerequisite for bulk funding
* Delivers bulk funding to centres
* Produces and facilitates the production of curriculum resources
* Responsible for the administration of the Discretionary Grants and Loans Scheme for early childhood services

Education Review Office (ERO)

* Reviews charters annually
* Reports on the extent early childhood centres, groups and home based schemes are meeting the objectives of their charter to the centre and to the Minister
* Monitors the impact on early childhood education of other parts of the education system, such as: Special Education Services, Early Childhood Development Unit and the Policy advice of the Ministry of Education

The Early Childhood Development Unit

The Early Childhood Development Unit has been set up to promote and encourage the development and provision of quality, accessible and culturally appropriate early childhood education services.

The ECDU has a national office in Wellington and eleven district offices. Some districts have additional offices in local centres within the district. Each district has a district manager with a team of early childhood co-ordinators. All districts, as part of the early childhood co-ordinator team, have a Maori co-ordinator and nine of the districts have a Pacific Island co-ordinator

* The ECDU district teams offer information, advice and support for early childhood groups and organisations working towards meeting minimum standards and developing charters.

* Any centre which does not have access to an advisory service of its own is required to use this agency as a primary support service.

* The ECDU also offers Inservice Management Development Training in charter development for managers or management committees and centre owners, parents, and centre staff.

See the Early Childhood Development Unit District Office for :

* Advice on early childhood education
* Training for managers or owners, parents and staff of early childhood centres
* Parent support and education
* Information and resources on early childhood education.

Address of your District Early Childhood Development Unit Office:

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Names of District Manager ECDU and Early Childhood Co-ordinators:

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The Special Education Service

The Special Education Service is a free-standing self-administering organisation. It provides advice, guidance and support for the benefit of infants, children and young people with special developmental, and educational needs. It also provides information and assistance for individual assessments and programme planning.

The SES structure consists of a national office led by a general manager and twelve district offices each led by a District Manager. Within each district there is a District Adviser Early Intervention to co-ordinate services to children under the age of 5 years.

Early intervention covers special education services for infants and young children with special developmental needs, available from birth to a maximum of 6 months after entry into the school system.

An annual contractual agreement between the SES and the Ministry of Education states what services the SES will provide. A district service plan will be developed by each district beginning with early intervention services, in full consultation with other service providers and relevant special interest groups.

Specialist personnel include psychologists, speech language therapists, visiting teachers, advisers, early intervention teachers, special group teachers and part time teachers through discretionary hours (ECE). The early childhood sector is currently the only sector where the SES is responsible for direct teaching services.

The SES supports the delivery of early intervention services through teams. The composition of these teams will vary according to local needs and resources. They need to encompass a wide range of professional skills and therefore a psychologist, speech-language therapist, physiotherapist is usually involved as well as a teacher.

An Individual Developmental Plan (IDP) will be the key to meeting the special developmental needs of the infant or young children. Parents, whanau, and all those who provide a service to the infant or young child in the community will be involved in the IDP process. The process involves assessment, objective setting, programme development and implementation, and the identification of resources necessary to meet the infant's or young child's needs.

Centres may be eligible for additional support to assist them to work with children with special developmental needs. Resources are currently available from the Ministry of Education on the recommendation of the SES.

Contact the district office of the Special Education Service.

* In any cases where you have children in your centre or group diagnosed as having special developmental needs
* Where you would like assessment of a child whose parents agree may have special developmental needs
* Where you require advice and support in providing for or identifying special developmental needs.
* For information on support and resources for assisting children with special developmental needs

If you do not know the address of your district Special Education Service, contact either your district ECDU office or the national office of the SES.

National Office - Box 10601 The Terrace
Wellington
Ph 499 2599

Address of your District Special Education Service Office:

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Name of District Manager: .....

Contacts:

Early Intervention

Psychologists

Speech Therapists

See also 'Meeting the Needs of Young Children with Special Developmental Needs', A Resource Package for Charter Development in Early Childhood Settings.

The Parent Advocacy Council

The Parent Advocacy Council is an independent organisation which helps parents or caregivers who are worried about some aspect of the education system.

The job of their advisory staff is to listen to parents, inform them of their rights, and, if necessary, support them through the correct channels.

If the problem does not get resolved, the Council has the power in law to consider the matter in a more formal way.

Use the Parent Advocacy Council

* If meetings are held in the community, to ensure that early childhood needs are heard
* Where the demand for early childhood education is not able to be met through the system
* Where early childhood needs are being disadvantaged by the education system.

Address of Parent Advocacy Council:

Sandy Beattie,
Director
PO Box 12191
9 Pipitea Street,
Thorndon,
Wellington

Telephone 721 928

Toll Free Line 0800 656 582

Name of Parent Advocacy Council Contact

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The Ministry of Education

The Ministry of Education is responsible for Government policy on minimum standards which are the requirements for licensing, as well as the standards which all early childhood centres and groups must meet in order to be eligible for bulk grant funding.

There is a District Office of the Ministry in your area. Liaison officers from your Ministry District Office will approve licences for services and negotiate and approve charters with the management of early childhood centres and groups.

Changes to an approved charter, e.g. to the centre's programme, conditions of work, ratios of staff to children must be re-negotiated with the District Ministry Office. There will be no additional charge made where circumstances make renegotiation a necessity.

Similarly, any changes made to licensing or charter requirements or to centre funding will be publicised through the Ministry. The Ministry also has responsibility for some curriculum resources for early childhood education.

See the Ministry for:

* Information about licensing or charter requirements and procedures for approval
* Questions about charters
* Questions about bulk funding and discretionary grants and extra funding
* Any changes in your group or centre programme or operations
* Information about Government policies for education
* Information about curriculum resources for early childhood education

Address of your District Ministry Office:

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Names of District Manager/Liaison Officer contact:

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The Education Review Office

The Education Review Office is separate from the Ministry. Its function is to review all educational services - and this includes all licensed and chartered early childhood centres and groups as well as home-based schemes.

Reviewers will look at ways centres and groups are meeting their charter objectives. They will make sure that centres are meeting the objectives laid down by Government and also that they are clearly, and successfully, working towards implementing the plans and objectives they described in their charter.

Reviewers will visit each centre or group annually. Special reviews can also be held in cases of serious concern.

The report of the review team will be sent to the centre, which is required to make it available to parents, staff and local community.

See the Education Review Office:

* Annually for the review of charters.
* As part of a monitoring process for licenses and charters for centres.
* For information on monitoring and review methods
* To present annual audited accounts

(Note that the review teams will aim to work with all of those involved in your centre or group - management, staff, parents and children)

Address of District ERO Office:

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Names of reviewers: .....

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Dates of Review:

...../...../ 90 ...../...../ 91 ...../...../ 92 ...../...../ 93 ...../...../ 94

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Other Government Agencies

Centres and groups will have on-going contact with other agencies.
Subsidies will continue to be available through the Department of Social Welfare.

Other organisations could be used by centres in meeting minimum standards and charter requirements.

Centres and groups will have the responsibility of contacting those organisations and agencies as needed. (See requirements re licensing)

Centres should also use professional support services which are pertinent to their own situation, e.g. Umbrella organisations .

Name of Agency **Address** **Contact Name**

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Good relationships depend on good communication links

Charter Licensing Process

1. Gathering Information

* Consult with your Early Childhood Development Unit District Office
* Check that your local contact information is up to date and accurate.
* Make contact with each of the helping agencies.
  File resource material available and ensure that your centre or group will receive all further information and resources.
* Make up a handy guide of names and phone numbers to keep by the phone.

Use this information to:

Check that you have access to accurate up-to-date information

* Keep in touch with any developments and requirements through your District Offices of the Ministry and Early Childhood Development Unit, who should provide all relevant and new information
* Ensure that you and your centre or group are familiar and friendly with agencies
* Get the help you need, when you need it. Help is a phone call away.

The links between your centre or group and the Early Childhood Development Unit, the Special Education Service, the Ministry, and the Education Review Office agencies are crucial to the successful operation of your centre or group.

2 Consultation

Centres are required to:

Consult with parents, staff, and the community about their charter during the development stage.

Write up and make available
i) the methods used to do this
ii) the results of the consultations

This chapter has:

* An introduction to consultation
* Notes on bicultural consultation
* Consultative methods
* Ongoing ideas

Introducing Consultation

Consultation is something that often tends to happen informally. This is particularly true for early childhood centres and groups where a number of factors make the group process difficult.

For example:

* Parents working, with little time, money, or inclination to go out in the evening to meetings
* Parents living some distance away from centres.
* Staff working on a part-time or rostered basis make it verydifficult to choose a time when all can be part of a meeting.
* Lack of liaison and communication between management and centre may require looking at more carefully.
  Situations where centres or groups are run by a church, charitable trust or have a particular philosophical approach will need extra patience and time.

Organise, Action, Record (OAR)

The process of **OAR** - organising information needed, actioning or planning as required and reporting on or recording what happens - can be used to plan a consultation process that meets charter requirements effectively.

The same process can also be used to develop the charter itself.

For each section of the charter process:

Organise

* what method of consultation you will use
* what you want to consult about

Action

* what needs to be done to let people know about the consultation process, e.g. advertising meetings and getting out information
* preparations needed for the consultation such as topics to cover, pens, paper etc, newsletter published for postal feedback etc
* have the consultation

Reporting

* How the consultation feedback and process will be given, recorded and filed.

Bicultural Consultation - He Korero Rangapu

(Early Childhood Management Handbook, Section 3, Charter , Pages 6 and 15, Section 4, Charter Guide, pages 31-33, pages 38-39 Charter Guide)

Partnership needs to focus on two sub-principles:

'Equity' which recognises differences.

'Equality' which recognises similarities.

Biculturalism focuses on two further sub-principles, that of **'autonomy'** in recognition of everyone's need for well-being, and **'reciprocity'** which recognises the need for 'freedom' so that mutual **respect** and **cooperation** are made possible.

With these principles and Government policy in mind it is important that all early childhood groups and centres operate from a biculture perspective and are committed to the principles of the partnership contained in the Treaty of Waitangi. Management, centre and the community need to be open to alternative ways of operating.

Many roads are not well signposted on your journey through a Maori Consultation Process. The following guidelines were prepared by the Early Childhood Development Unit with reference to the State Services Commission Partnership Dialogue April, 1988. These guidelines could help you in your consultation with the local Maori community.

See also **'Advice for Early Childhood Management on the Early Childhood Charter and the Treaty of Waitangi'** available from your Early Childhood Development District Office.

Consultation should happen even if there is a Kohanga Reo operating in your community

Guidelines for Consultation

These guidelines may assist you in carrying out a consultation process with Maori and finding out all you can about your district:

1. Set up a contact directory of the Maori people in your district.
   The strategies for doing this include making the contact with the Tangata Whenua whether they be Iwi, Hapuu, Whanau, Maatua, Etahi Kaumatua or Kohanga Reo or all of these groups of people. This may often be best by using a personal approach. (To do this you may need to ask local school principals, churches, marae, committees, parents and community leaders. If you have any problems with this your District Early Childhood Development Unit, Maori Co-ordinator can help.

2. Decide what you want to consult about.

3. Once you have a representative group that is willing to be a part of such a process then you can proceed with arrangements for meeting.

4. A venue for a meeting may be offered by Maori. Let Maori choose if the offer comes from you.
   Suggested venues:
   Marae, Centre, Community Hall, Home, School or there may be others.

5. Take guidance from Tangata Whenua on format for the meeting.

6. Your initial meeting should be one that is used primarily to establish a bond between you and the group that is going to assist your 'getting it right'.

   It can be a time well spent if the initial meeting allows this to happen.
   This initial meeting may only go as far as discussing your consultation needs and an attempt to engage assistance.

7. Use the discussion for setting up a more inclusive meeting.
   Important - Take time. Spend time. Don't rush it.

Different areas you might like to ask for advice on could be some of the following;

Your centre: the programme; suitable songs, karakia, activities,
The environment: pictures, photos, welcomes, notice boards
Use of language: verbally and non verbally, pronunciation
Routines and Practices
Local myths and legends
Values of child rearing practices

Remember too that many of the people you may call on have other major commitments in their local community and this should always be taken into account.

8. It is a good idea in any consultative relationship with Maori, and courteous to provide feedback. Let people know what the results of the exercise have been and what decisions have or are to be taken. This is a good insurance for future consultative relationships. This may provide opportunities for the monitoring of your efforts at Maori and hopefully mean continuing participation in shared activities.

Remember that meeting face to face in order to do this reporting will also clear up any misunderstandings. The written word is not always the best way to report. Future consultations should always have regard for Maori sensitivities. Tribes tend to be enduring and permanent things and the Maori memory is long.

See also list of books in the bibliography particularly 'Talking Past Each Other'

The following illustrates some important differences to bear in mind:

Silence is Golden

Cultures do not only act differently they think differently. For example, Pakeha are usually uncomfortable about silence - especially when waiting for a reply. They will wonder what's happening if, they say , they visit a marae and there are long pauses - especially when one person has been addressed, and he just sits there, not replying. He's not being rude. He's just enjoying the silence - and perhaps gathering his thoughts. And if Pakeha people can understand that, they will find the marae atmosphere pleasant and relaxed.

Methods of Consultation

(Early Childhood Management Handbook Section 3, Charter, Page 7, Section 4, Charter Guide, Ways of Consulting Page 3.)

Although meetings are the most common form of consulting, newsletters, surveys and informal discussion all have their place.

1 Meetings

Preparation for Meetings Successful discussion meetings need to:

* Suit the people concerned.
* Plan a meeting around mealtimes, e.g. a soup and sandwich supper, a week-end lunch, a breakfast meeting etc.
* Plan to provide for child supervision.
* Budget overtime or special payments for staff to attend out-of-work meetings.
* Negotiate with staff (if applicable), parents or management committees to share child-minding responsibilities - you may need several meetings to cater for everybody.
* Consider different types of meetings over the consultation period, e.g. first meeting held during the evening, a later one at a week- end . Have information available beforehand about the meeting.
* Notice-board posters - *''We need your feedback - help us write our charter''*.
* The Early Childhood Management Handbook to be made available and easily read by parents and staff - make a cosy corner for ''charter browsing''.
* Keep this book **"The Useful Book on Charters for Early Childhood Groups"** (or relevant photocopied pages) available for people to read.
* Give someone responsibility for producing a newsletter re consulting requirements for licenses and charters.
* Let people know the topics to be discussed and how long the meeting will last. People are more likely to come if they feel it won't be a lot of talking for a long time about something very vague.
* Try to organise transport networks etc. Ask groups of parents to come. Coming alone is not easy.

Have well kept records

* See that preplanning and publicity material is filed.
* Appoint someone to record what happens at the meeting and to collate feedback.
* Note numbers attending, number of meetings.

Structure the meeting well

* Be clear about what can be achieved.
  A consultative group will feed in ideas. A smaller task group is more effective in wording these for the charter.
* Use the suggestions given in each section of this book to guide consultation.
* Plan the way the meeting can be organised.
* Note - do not try to resolve differences or write the charter, but record all ideas, and the priority given to these, and note differences in points of view.
* Let the meeting know they will be given feedback on how their input is used, e.g. draft charter to be circulated, minutes to be sent etc.

Make sure the meeting is well led. Set out a meeting plan.

A Meeting Plan

A well-tested and straightforward plan is to:

Outline the format. Start by talking to the group about with how you plan to organise the meeting. Give a time for finishing (and keep to it). Introduce others helping with the organisation especially those taking notes/organising food /childminding etc .
Say what will happen afterwards - e.g. the charter draft will be circulated and/or there will be x number of further meetings etc. *(About 10 minutes).*

Give a general introduction - you may like to copy some pages from this book to set the scene, e.g. on the new structures. Stress that you want their IDEAS to use in writing or revising your charter. *(About 10 minutes).*

Ask if there are any questions and take time to deal with these.
(Probably 5 minutes, but may be longer).

Set them a task to discuss or decide. Use the sections in this book for guidelines here. Copy pages if possible to be a base for discussion. Provide paper and pens.
(About 20 - 25 minutes, give time to talk and settle into groups).

Take a break here for cups of coffee and a snack if you like. This is often a good time to relax and really get enthusiastic about the process. If the meal is a supper/dinner, have a brief break instead. Parents may enjoy a chance to chat and look around. Encourage this.
(About 10 - 15 minutes).

In a large group ask for feedback from each group. Record points on on large sheets of paper if possible. A useful idea is to ask each group for ONE point only. Go round the groups again until all points have been covered. (Be firm - say "We'll come back to this group again", if they want to give you more than one point) *(About 15 - 20 minutes).*

Pin up a sheet of paper or use a whiteboard or ask one person to take responsibility for recording any differences of opinion as they arise. Ask the group to say if they have conflicting views/ different ideas and write down what they say. *(Throughout the meeting).*

Read out the list of important points and ideas, and the list of points of difference. Ask if the group has anything to add. Give time to think about this. *(At least 5 minutes).*

Remind the group what will happen next - their ideas will be used to write a draft. They will be sent copies etc.

Finish with thanks to those who have helped and refreshments
(Say 30 minutes)

This will give you a one and a half to two hour meeting. A smaller meeting may take less time and of course a meeting plus meal will be longer.

2 Newsletters and surveys

It is not always possible to get people together for meetings. If this is a difficulty for your centre or group, or if you feel that the majority of those whose views you would like to hear will not come to meetings, many of the preparations listed above for consultation meetings can still be used if modified slightly.

Getting peoples' ideas

When methods other than face to face meetings are used, it is particularly important to note the following points:

* Make sure that people are familiar with what is happening.
  Publicise the charter requirements widely.

* State clearly what you want comments on.

* Design a survey form or questionnaire to send or give out.
  All adults, parents and staff could have or be given a copy, personally if possible, so that it can be explained and discussed.

  Surveys should be specific with well thought out questions. There should not be too many questions, and alternative answers where participants can indicate their preference may be useful. However remember to also include a place where individuals can express their own thoughts.

* Either post copies to all involved or keep copies in the centre to distribute.

* Arrange a prominent place for these to be returned to. If posting out, give a send-back date or make a poster saying , e.g. "HAVE YOU GIVEN US FEEDBACK? - FRIDAY IS THE FINAL DAY"

* Give someone responsibility for writing up the ideas sent back under headings if possible. Include any points of difference/conflicts.

* Display and circulate the information for feedback. State what will be done with the information, (as you did for the meeting format.)

3 Informal Consultation

Prepare background information about the charter process, areas where you require feedback or prepare a draft charter to comment on.

* Have a number of copies available for all the adults, parents, staff and management to see. Talk about these with all the people concerned.

* Attach a feedback sheet for comments or have a large sheet of paper on the wall.

* Keep a ''Comments and Ideas'' book at the centre and encourage people to write in their ideas. Set a dead-line for this.

* Add other ideas which arise out of conversations and informal discussions - ''Mr Mangel says how much he likes the range of books we've got'', A parent was upset at the way meals are organised - felt children needed more discipline to sit still''.
Or use a tape recorder.

* On a set date, collate all comments and provide feedback if possible through posters, newsletters etc.

* Keep all the comments on file.

Licensing & Charter Process:

2. Consulting and first initial budgeting

Use the ideas and guidelines in this section to:

* Decide what methods will be used for consulting about the charter
* At what stages will consultations take place
* Develop a plan for getting information through consulting
* Decide who has responsibility for developing and recording consultation procedures
* Plan any budget costs required.

Use this information to:

* Organise the tasks required for developing a plan for consultation
* Identify budget costs over and above present expenses
* Delegate responsibility for particular tasks
* Develop resources on leadership skills and group procedures

Consultation with others involved with your community and parent body is an essential element of both the charter and the review process

3 The Case for Early Childhood Education

This section is an important prelude to charter development, particularly when you are setting up a centre.
However all people working in early childhood groups and centres - parents, staff and management - need to be very clear about what is essential in early childhood education and what is different about their particular service.

The information acquired will classify the requirements for your early childhood service and allow you to work towards meeting government regulations.

This chapter has:

* a consultative process to follow to determine your particular early childhood education philosophy
* specific areas and aspects of early childhood that need to be considered

Consultation Process

Consulting with parents and staff

This section can be used at the start of the consultation process for charter development.

* The examples used here can be a starting point for a group not used to a consultative process.
* Look at the **headings, age range etc**. Ask small groups or pairs to list the ones they feel are important and add any others they can think of.
* Discuss these and put an asterisk beside the ones which are felt to be the most important.
* Use the Licensing and Charter Process chart as a guide to write out the group's priorities to keep in mind when making decisions about your charter objectives and management plans.
* Write these up in a newsletter for parents and staff.

What makes early childhood education different?

Clarifying and understanding those things which are characteristic of early childhood centres is necessary in order for charter negotiations and review processes. These require an interpretation of guidelines and standards as they apply to early childhood education.

Specific differences of early childhood education can include:

Age range and developmental stages of children attending - development from infancy to five years old covers a tremendous span, far greater than at any other stage.

Consider

- organisation of environment for younger and/or older children
- need for careful record keeping on health and routines for infants
- pace of day geared to different rates of growth and styles of learning
- staff and parents awareness of range of ages and abilities
- training and regular progress report meetings
- special needs and differently abled children

Hours - flexible attendance is a characteristic of many early childhood centres. It affects all aspects of a group or centre's operation from parents and their involvement to administration, staff employment and deployment, training and programme organisation

Consider

- opening times, times of sessions etc.
- meal and snack times
- time for restful and "home-like" activities for all day children
- organisation of programme to meet needs of short-term stay children
- staff rostering to allow on-going communication about children
- staff rosters and ratios to allow relieving of staff for breaks etc
- variety of parent support and information methods

The importance of routines. In early childhood groups and centres which may have flexible attendance, children who attend for long hours, children coming and going throughout the day, routines for everyday living are as essential a part of the curriculum for both children and staff as the programme of activities for play.

Consider

- acceptance of flexible routines and individual attention for infants
- balance between play and social learning activities such as toilet training, toothbrushing practices, table manners
- ample time and emphasis given to routines for sleep, awaking, arriving, farewelling.

* **Flexibility of pace throughout the day.** All early childhood centres know the importance of pacing children's activities but this sense of pace - which includes time to unwind, time to drop into sleep, time to wake up gently, time to release end of day energy - is a vital part of all day centres

Consider

- rosters and ratios for staff which allow relaxed time with children
- inclusion of "unwinding" activities e.g. audio-visual aids, play by themselves, music
- including children in household routines, e.g. helping with dishes watching adults at work in kitchen or office, shopping
- adult-initiated routines such as tea with parents, other staff, laughter times.

* **Diversity of settings** for surroundings and buildings. Early childhood centres and groups can be sessional, or fullday centres or a combination of both. There are many settings, ranging from a hall to homes to large purpose-built centres.

Consider

- suitability for young children and their parents
- comfortable socialising corners for children and adults
- different equipment in unusual places
- materials for play and learning appropriate to environment and community
- outside areas

* **Goals and philosophies.** Early childhood centres reflect diverse philosophies and their curriculum and programme does not spring from one common core.

Consider

- wide variety in furnishing and play equipment
- standard of equipment
- innovative, home-made, culturally based and specialised equipment for play
- integration with other age groups, e.g. parent/whanau/access/ after-school
- adults and staff with particular qualities , experience or qualifications, e.g. balance of mature/younger staff, parents as staff, male, female etc.

* **Diversity of management, committees and parent involvement.**

Parents are involved in diverse ways in early childhood centres. They may run sessions completely, take part in some sessions,only help with domestic or maintenance matters or have no time to do anything. Interactions with owners, parents and staff, may be just built on snatches of conversation. Building relationships, understanding and trust must be based on different types of communication, not just newsletters and noticeboards etc.
Social occasions such as barbecues - are all part of the sense of involvement and an opportunity to build your community.

Consider

- confidentiality has to be maintained
- explanatory introductory material
- staff rostered to front porch/cloakroom at beginning and end of day
- walls used as noticeboards for all staff and parents
- armchairs, opportunities for cups of tea and a chat for parents, staff
- management/supervisor office for private talks
- adults and children's personal space must be respected.

Charter Licensing Process

3. Your Early Childhood Education Philosophy

What is special about your early childhood service ?
Consult with parents and staff to write a list of the things which are different and important.

These may be general statements about your early childhood service or about your group or centre in particular.

Use this information to:

Clarify your philosophy and values as part of the consultative process

Help in the development of a management plan for your centre

Inform Early Childhood Development Unit Office, the Ministry of Education and the Education Review Office, about your service

Develop skills as advocates for children and early childhood education

Clarifying what your early childhood service is, will be an important step in developing and implementing a charter

4 Aims, Goals and Objectives

Setting objectives means starting from where you are.

All early childhood centres already have aims and objectives. They may not be written down - or they may not be written down well - but they will certainly be part of the unwritten history of the centre.

Both the minimum standards required for licensing and the early childhood charter document require centres and groups to set out their aims and objectives.

This chapter has:

* A three step consultation process for objective setting and how and when to do this
* Definitions of aims, goals and objectives
* Examples of strategies for identifying aims which could be turned into objectives

There are many useful strategies to help parents, staff, centre owners and management committees identify the underlying aims and objectives in their centre.

This chapter focuses on a basic strategy which is practical and easy to carry out. It can be used as a guide for a consultation meeting with staff, parents and/or management.

It will provide information on the things that happen in your centre or group that are seen to be important. This will give a basis for a later evaluation of your practices and a guide to future planning.

Consultation process for setting objectives

The Three-step Process

1. Look at the things that happen in your centre or group which you feel are important.
2. Say why they are important.
3. Turn these answers into aims (general statements) then write them as objectives to use as a base for developing your centre or group management plans

When you use this process in consultation :

- ☐ Explain the Three-step Process as above. Ask parents, staff, management to focus on, say, three things that they feel are important and to say what makes them important to them.
- ☐ Do this either at a consultative meeting, with individuals during or outside session times or through a newsletter if necessary.
- ☐ Stress that you are thinking of small things - give examples from the following section.
- ☐ Explain that the process of consulting and writing aims and objectives for your charter management plan should be based on what is actually happening in your centre, not as a theoretical exercise.

What is an aim, a goal, an objective ?

An aim is seen as what you want or would like to happen.
A goal usually states in general terms what you want to achieve
An objective needs to be specific

Aims (or purposes) and the proposed methods for achieving these must be provided before a licence can be granted
(Early Childhood Management Handbook, Section 1, page 2)

Goals and objectives must be written for each section of your charter

e.g.	**Aim;**	All parents should know about what happens at the centre
	A goal;	Provision will be made for ongoing communication and interaction with parents and whanau about the curriculum of the centre.
	An objective;	The monthly newsletter will have some explanatory notes about a specific curriculum area.

You may have as many objectives as you wish for each of the sections as set out in the Early Childhood Management Handbook

Objectives must be:

Specific	Concise and to the point and relate directly to the subject *(do not try to cover too many aspects in one objective)*
Measurable	Specific action to be taken *(how the objective is to be achieved)*
Time bound	The objective is met within a stated time. *(e.g. it may be going to be met over a one or two year period and could depend on cost, people and resources.)*
Achievable	The objective needs to be a practical and realistic expectation
Challenging	By setting challenging, stimulating goals and objectives quality education is attained

Objectives should *not* be -

General, boring, vague, ambiguous or unattainable.

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Strategies

The examples below will give you an idea of the process at work. A general aim has been included but it is really for your centre or group to work out their own specific objectives.

(See Writing the Charter Document, in this book for some other examples of written objectives.)

If you are responsible for your centre layout use this process:

☐ Walk through the centre and note as you go things which are important to you about the layout, equipment, furnishing, etc of your building

☐ Ask yourself (or get a trusted colleague to ask you) "Why is that important?"

☐ Answer honestly - ask "why" again if the reason is not clear.

"I always like to have the dough table near the door"

"Why?"

" It's a good way for shy, new children to feel at home. They can sit and play with the dough - it feels familiar and they can look the place over. "

Aim: To help children settle into centre

"I put that low barrier across the room so that the babies can play there."

"Why?

Aim: To provide babies with a stimulating environment, access to other children and a safe place to play

"They can watch what the older children are doing without any danger of being pushed over. Some of the older ones like to come across and play with them too".

Aim: That children are given many opportunities to develop socially

If you are talking about what is important to you in your programme use this process

☐ *" Around 10 am we have a group time when the children work in small groups with the staff"*

"Why"

"It's important for children to have one to one time with adults where they can do specific things , perhaps helping them write their names if they are nearly ready to go off to school.

Aim: To help children learn appropriate skills

"Why?"

"The parents want it, primarily. And it gives children confidence. They feel pretty good about it".

Aim: To understand and respect parents' goals for their children

If you are Centre Owners or Management Committees you could look at your budget priorities and administrative procedures using this process

" Why do we set the fees at that level?"

" Why do we employ trained staff? Why do we employ trained and untrained staff ?"

" Why don't we employ someone to do the cooking, cleaning etc.?"

☐ It will be necessary to identify important procedures and records

"Why do you ask parents for details of a child's toys and interests

Aim: To build links between the centre and the home

" Why is the supervisor in our centre the only person allowed to talk to parents about their children?"

Aim: To ensure that parents receive accurate consistent information about their child.

☐ Ask staff to identify important practices and ways to work with children''

" Why do you like to have a lot of junk and natural materials for play?

Aim: To give children an understanding of the natural environment

" Why is it important that the staff wash their hands after changing nappies?

Aim: To provide a healthy safe environment

"Why do you need to have a space for yourself away from the children?

Aim: To ensure that staff needs as well as children's needs are met

☐ Ask all parents what they feel are the important things about the centre and about their involvement and why.

"I like the way the adults looking after the children always smile and wave good-bye even if we haven't got time to talk. Why do I like that? It's important to me, I know that. It makes me feel we're part of the centre."

Aim: That parents are respected as partners in the education of their children.

The honest answers to some questions may be based on financial necessity or be simply based on habit rather than on principles.
Note these areas, including all points of view.
At the end of the meeting, return to each point if there is time, for further discussion.
Alternatively, list all areas of disagreement and write these up for a further meeting.The section on Settling Differences, Resolving Conflict, in this book will focus on resolving points of disagreement and stress.

(See also Early Childhood Management Handbook, Section 4, Charter Guide, page 29.)

Licensing & Charter Process:

4. Setting your Aims and Objectives

What is important about your centre or group? Identify the things that help it function the way it does and say why they are important

Use these reasons to write out aims, goals and objectives for your centre or group. Illustrate these with practical examples to help parents and staff understand what they mean in practice.

Note any priorities and points of disagreement separately

Use this information to:

Develop a set of aims and objectives for your centre

Write a management plan for the future development of your centre or group

Have a basis for evaluation of the processes and programme of your group or centre

Identify potential areas of stress, disagreement or conflict

(By now you should be considering your minimum standards as well, see Chapter 5 of this book - Meeting minimum standards for licensing)

Identifying what you do and why you do it is the next step in writing a clear statement of aims and objectives.

5 Meeting minimum standards for Licensing

All early childhood centres (working towards a licence and on to a charter) are required to meet a set of minimum standards.
(These are set out in the Early Childhood Management Handbook, Section 2, Minimum Standards.)

This does not include groups such as funded Playgroups and Pacific Island Language Groups who receive funding from the Early Childhood Development Unit and are not covered by these requirements.

This chapter has :

* To whom minimum standards apply
* What to consider when planning to meet minimum standards
* The regulations and acts you must comply with
* The papers you must have when applying for a licence or charter

Minimum standards

- ☐ Apply to all centres, other than those who meet the criteria for funding by the Early Childhood Development Unit
- ☐ Will be monitored and endorsed annually
- ☐ Must continue to be met by centres
- ☐ Will be a condition of charter status
- ☐ Do not entitle centres to receive Government bulk funding

Licensed Early Childhood Centres

May:

- ☐ Charge fees
- ☐ Seek funds from other sources
- ☐ Be eligible for Department of Social Welfare subsidies for children attending
- ☐ Work towards becoming chartered
- ☐ Receive advisory help from the Early Childhood Development Unit.

(See Early Childhood Management Handbook, Section 1, Directions and Procedures for how to apply for a licence.)

Planning for minimum standards
(Licensing)

Early childhood centres which wish to receive bulk Government funding will, in addition to these standards, be required to show that they are working towards a further set of objectives and becoming chartered centres.
(See chapter 6, From Licensing to Charter, page 49, of this book)

Previous regulations for early childhood centres and groups have been superseded by the minimum standards set out in the Early Childhood Management Handbook. Existing regulations also continue to apply until minimum standards in the Early Childhood Management Handbook become regulation by law. At such time the regulations will be publicised by the Ministry of Education.

It is important to read and understand each statement in the Early Childhood Management Handbook. Each requirement should be complied with and be verifiable.
The requirements are in the following categories:
(Early Childhood Management Handbook, Section 2 Minimum Standards)

1. Health and Safety:
   - The Safe and Healthy Environment (page 2)
   - Safe and Healthy Practices (page 10)
2. Curriculum (page 13)
3. Management (page 15)
4. Staffing (page 17)
5. Parents or Whanau (page 20)
6. Licences and charters (page 21)

Members of an umbrella organisations already have policies and specific requirements which will be of use and other groups or centres can approach the Early Childhood Development Unit for help.

(These categories also apply in more detail when you are working on your charter. See Early Childhood Management Handbook Sections 3 and 4)

Regulations and Acts

The minimum standards require centres to be familiar with, and comply with the requirements of a number of different regulations and Acts.

The following you may need to consult and be familiar with although often an umbrella organisation will have already made sure these apply.

Planning and construction

The Town and Country Planning Act 1977, for planning approval if not on Crown Land,
(Government Print, $14.50 amendments 3.40, 2.20, 1.50.)

Disabled Persons Community Act 1975, for requirements as to fittings and centre design
(Government Print, $3.50, amendments 1.50, 1.50, 2.20, 1.50)

Drainage and Plumbing Regulations 1978 (& appropriate schedules).
(Government Print $5.00, amendments 3.70)

NZ Standards 6703 Interior Lighting Design Table B1, for artificial lighting levels
(Standards Assoc. of NZ, $60.75 Member, $101.25 Non-member., or contact local Council for information)

NZ Standards 1900 Chap 5 (Fire Resisting Construction and Means of Egress).
(Standards Assoc. of NZ, $30 Member, $50.60 Non member, or see your local Council)

Fire Designs of Education Building', Department of Education, Code of Practice.
(Ministry of Education, District Office)

NZ Standards for premises, furniture, fittings, equipment and materials
(Education Code of Practice. Five Designs of Education Buildings, Ministry of Education, District Office)

NZ Standard 9201- Restriction of Access to Private Swimming Pools
(Standards Assoc. of NZ, $13.50 Member, $22.50 Non member or see your local Council)

Local Authority bylaws (upkeep of premises and grounds)

Operations

Child Care centres are regulated by Child Care Centre Regulations (1985), Sections 17 & 19 (suspension of licence and appeals procedures), section 30 (right of entry), Ministry of Education (Government Print $3.40, amendments 2.20) until new legislation is completed.

Minimum Standards or Regulations for early childhood education centres and home-based schemes, Ministry of Education, District Office.

Children and Young Persons and Their Families Act 1989

Second Schedule Health Regulations (Infectious and Notifiable Diseases) 1966 - staff and children, Health Department, Health Development Unit)

Traffic Regulations 1976, Reg. 30, transport of children by car. (Government Print, $8.50)

Labour Regulations Act 1987 (Government Print),

State Sector Act 1988 (Preschool classes attached to primary schools only) (Government Print)

Copies of Acts are available from Government Bookshops or the relevant Government Department or from Government Print, PO Box 14173, Wellington.

Copies of N.Z. Standards are available from The N.Z. Standards Association, 181 - 187 Victoria St., Private Bag, Wellington.

Remember- advice on meeting these and other legal requirements should be readily available from umbrella organisations.

Centres and groups are required to make contact with:

A Fire Safety Inspector, NZ Fire Service, or your local authority for
- i) an annual check of fire protection procedures and equipment
- ii) training for all staff in earthquake and fire drills.

Local or Regional Controller of Civil Defence - notification of centre's location

Required Documentation for centres or groups applying for a license or charter

For the Ministry

A floor plan of the buildings (with measurements)

A sketch map of the entire premises showing dimensions and use of each part of the build ings and premises (site plan)

Appropriate town planning approval

An application on the appropriate form, available from the Ministry

A verified statement of early childhood qualifications held by staff
(including current first aid certificate information and a statement of staff ages)

Evidence of an annual fire safety check

A plan for the evacuation and care of children in the event of an emergency
(to be displayed in the centre)

Policy statements on programmes, management practices for child behaviour and child abuse as well as written statments on channels of communication with parents and staff

Have in the centre:

A weekly menu displayed in the centre. (if applicable)

Enrolment forms on which parent,guardian or whanau member has stated who is authorised to collect that child.

Written policies on the programme of activities, management practices for child behaviour and child abuse. (See Early Childhood Management Handbook, Section 2, 2 and 3)

Records as set out on in the Early Childhood Management Handbook,
(Section 2, Minimum Standards, p.16.)

A current licence or charter prominently displayed in the centre, *and-*

Show that their advertisements have included the information as shown in
Early Childhood Management Handbook (Section 2 Minimum Standards, page 21)

You may need to consult your Ministry District Liaison Officer for specific district requirements.

Licensing & Charter Process:

5 Meeting Minimum Standards for Licensing

Check the requirements your centre or group needs in order to meet minimum standards.

List these under major headings:
Health and Safety (environment and practices), Curriculum, Management, Staffing, Parents and Whanau, and Licences. Perhaps use sub-headings as given in the Early Childhood Management Handbook

Beside each one, note down any records needed, or checks required.

Use this information to:

Check that your centre is able to meet minimum standards re buildings equipment etc.

Check that your records and recording procedures are effective

Develop rosters for staff, systems for regular checks as required

Use as a basis for forward planning e.g. staff training, meetings, parent meetings.

Organising to meet licensing requirements is essential for both licensing and charter procedures

6 From Licensing to Charter

Having worked on your minimum standards for licensing you can proceed to develop your charter. The process of becoming chartered differs from the procedures for gaining a licence.
(See also Early Childhood Management Handbook, end of section 2 , Applying for a Charter.)

This chapter has:

* The essential differences between licensing and a charter
* Areas to be considered
* Questions you can ask to help you meet the charter requirements for the different areas and categories as set out in the Early Childhood Management Handbook

Licensing and a Charter: Differences

In order to become **licensed**, groups must demonstrate that they have fulfilled a number of conditions, set out as minimum standards. A **monitoring process** by the Ministry of Education will be used to check that they have done so.

In order to become **chartered**, licensed early childhood groups must show that you are planning ahead to improve and, or continuing to meet criteria under each category as set out on the next page. **This is of paramount importance**. You must be able to show evidence of the methods you will or have used to make these decisions and action them.

The **charter negotiation process** with a liaison officer from the Ministry will check that these plans are compatible with the aims and objectives set down by Government for all early childhood centres. This negotiation will be as well as the one undertaken for licensing.

To be eligible for the charter negotiation process a centre or group must meet the following criteria:

Must be licensed.
Must be operating,
Must be registered with the Ministry.

The **annual review process** by the Education Review Office, District Office Reviewers will check that you are fulfilling and implementing these aims and objectives effectively.

Chartering requirements

Areas to be Considered

The early childhood management and curriculum areas outlined in the charter document are:

The Learner - Curriculum and Programme
Special Needs
Health Safety and Environment
Relationships with Parents/Whanau
Treaty of Waitangi
Equity
Management
Staffing
Staff development and Advisory Support
Land and Buildings

In each category, groups and centres need to decide

1 Whether you are already meeting your own and Government's objectives or whether this is a priority area for development

2 What methods you will use to do this
(Early Childhood Management Handbook, Page 3, Section 4)
See also Chapter 2, Consultation and Chapter 9, Writing your Charter, of this book.

It is important to remember that the charter process calls for early childhood groups to plan ahead.

The review process will be used to ensure that all groups and centres are actually putting the plans they set out in their charter into effective action.

Early childhood groups and centres will not be required to have already met their objectives when charters are negotiated.

Questions

The following requirements have been identified in the Early Childhood Management Handbook.

Check through the questions below each one and note down what needs to be done and any costs, development work required.

Note who has responsibility for any action required.

Add anything else you feel needs actioning.

These questions have been asked, in progression, as set out in the Early Childhood Management Handbook - (although for convenience some questions have been put under the same headings and may need to be repeated as you work through the handbook). The checklist is designed to give you a quick method of making decisions on what needs to be done, where extra costs are involved, and where planning and preparation will be required.

(Note that **The Early Childhood Management Handbook**, *Section 3, Charter*, gives an outline statement of the principles, basic requirements and the management plan under each category. This builds on the written policies on management practices that you had to provide to meet minimum standards - *Section 2, Minimum Standards. Section 4, Charter Guide* - works through the same categories but in more detail. Not all areas have questions and you may well have to think up some of your own

Programme of charter consultation

Have meetings etc been arranged?
Who has the responsibility for organising this?
Has this cost been budgeted for?

Programme for reporting regularly to parents

Are the centre's methods of reporting,
e.g. newsletters, meetings, posters, word of mouth, notice boards recorded ?
Is there a record file for information sent, and who keeps it up to date?
Are any changes to this programme being considered ?
Does an additional cost for this need to be budgeted ?

Publicising Education Review Office reports to parents and community

Has it been decided how this is to be done and who will do this ?
Will there be any additional cost involved?

Programme planning and evaluation

Is there a written play programme?
How is the play programme decided? Are staff planning meetings held?
Is it developed after discussion on the children's ages, abilities and interests?
Are records kept to show this?
e.g. daily diary, observations of children, progress reports of children's development etc.
Do you have regularly available information on the ages of children, length of time in the centre, special developmental needs?
Does planning time and evaluation time need to be budgeted for, e.g. staff release time?
Will there be additional costs in planning, or writing up the programme?

Report on procedures for settling in children

Does your centre have set procedures for settling children?
Are these told to parents?
Are the procedures written down? If not, who will do this?

Informing parents about their child's day

Are there procedures for doing this?
e.g. word of mouth, written records, diary book, child's home/centre book?
Who is responsible for doing this?
Who will be responsible for writing out procedures used?
Are further procedures to be developed?

Parents' sighting of attendance register

Is there a system for parents to see and sign the register?
Does someone check that this is done?

Plan for communication and consultation with parents

Have parents been asked whether they are happy with the methods used to inform and consult them?
Are meetings well attended? Are newsletters useful? Is the notice board in a good site?
Is a staff member always rostered and available to talk with parents when they come to the centre?
Are the methods used in the centre written down?
Will there be future improvement costs involved
e.g. out-of-centre staff involvement, newsletter typing or photocopying, clerical work?

Provision of parent education and support

Are courses, talks etc organised for parents?
Is there regular information available for parents on community courses of interest?
Are there planned times for individual consultation/discussion with staff
Are outside community people such as Early Childhood Development Unit and Special Education Service advisers, Plunket, etc invited to meet with parents
Has someone responsibility for actioning this?
Is a programme planned and written out in advance? Is it publicised widely?
Are all programmes appropriate to the cultures, languages of parents?
Is there a budget cost for talks or courses etc. or do parents pay themselves?

Complaints procedure

Is there a standard procedure for complaints by parents and/or staff?
Is your organisation's policy on procedures available to parents and staff ?
Is there action needed to plan procedures/report on procedures used/develop and maintain a record system?

Transition to school procedures

Is progress information given to parents?
Are staff aware of school programmes, teaching classroom organisation?
Are links made with schools, e.g. children visit school?
Are there special goodbye parties, rituals?
Are records, progress reports, examples of work given to parents when children leave and who will do this?
Is there a cost to be budgeted for, e.g. a planning and consultation meetings, identifying and writing up procedures?
Have transition requirements for children with special developmental needs been checked out with Special Education Service?

Strategies and ways of meeting special developmental needs requirements

Is information on special developmental needs available to staff, management and parents?
Do you have the name of a person in the Special Education Service who can advise you?
Are programmes flexible to accommodate different needs?
Are there procedures for recording special needs requirements?
Is information on special developmental needs advice available for parents?
Is the staff: child ratio sufficient for one-to-one needs or special circumstances?
Is there a budget cost needed for staff training or relief or additional staffing?

Adaptions for children with special developmental needs

Is information on the requirements of the Disabled Persons Community Welfare Act available?

Have Special Education Services or other personnel been asked to advise the centre?

Have decisions to action changes, been made?

Will there be a budget cost involved for building, equipment, furnishings

Has a time-line for development been made?

Special Developmental Needs group records

(for Centres who have a special group attached)

Are there written procedures available on ways in which this group is organised within the centre?

Who has responsibility for this?

Is there more that could be done to integrate the group?
e.g. reorganisation, new procedures etc

Development plan, indoor, outdoor space

Is there regular evaluation and information available on areas needing development?

Is there a maintenance plan?

Are improvements planned; if so have these been costed?

Are play activities and some equipment moveable from indoors to outdoors (and visa versa)?

Are there spaces for quiet, active and individual play both inside and outside? Can children find a place to be alone? To concentrate on play? To be sociable?

Is storage convenient and accessible?

Are doorways and entrances easily negotiable and convenient for all children and easy for them to use to move inside and out freely?

Are there trees, planted areas outside?

Is there a budget cost involved for new development? Planning advice? New equipment? Trees or fences? Gardens?

Incorporating daily routines and safety procedures into the programme

Does the centre have a general policy on the importance of daily routines and methods used?

Is someone responsible for regular safety checks of equipment/layout/procedures?

Does the centre have regular, well understood fire and earthquake routines and procedures?

Are there effective ways of recording information on infants' routines for sleep, eating, toileting?

Has someone been given responsibility for actioning safety and reporting procedures?

Do staff discuss and evaluate the efficiency of routines and procedures regularly?

Is there a need for training, in-service?

Statement on incorporating Maori values, customs and practices

What policy does the centre use on working towards bi-culturalism in the centre?

What resources, books, equipment, furnishing are there in the centre which reflect Maori culture and values?

Have local Maori Runanga been consulted on ways of integrating Maori values into centre practices and language?

Is there information available on tangata whenua contacts in the community?

Have advisory services such as the Early Childhood Development Unit or umbrella organisations been asked for help in course provision and resource help for staff training?

Is time available for staff members,parents and management as well as other centre personnel to take responsibility for drawing up a draft plan for staff training on these issues?

Is there a budget cost set aside for resources, books, courses, planning over the next three years?

Has a proportion of staff in-service training, time and content been made available for his area over the next three years?

Outline of how equity requirements are being met

Is there information readily available, and regularly updated on the sexes, ethnic backgrounds, languages etc of children at the centre?

Does someone have responsibility for recording and analysing this information?

Are the languages of families attending the centre used in speaking, writing, newsletters, books etc?

Do equipment, play materials, furnishings in the centre include things which are familiar to the culture and background of families attending?

Is there staff training, including staff meeting time available to discuss equity issues?

Is there a budget cost involved in planning or provision?

Record of monies received

from Ministry of Education and Department of Social Welfare

In addition to audited accounts showing all monies received, is there a system for recording Government monies and subsidies received?

Is there a person with responsibility for this task as their job description?

Management plan

on centre policies on staffing, finance, organisation and programmes

Has someone been given the responsibility for drawing up a draft plan for discussion using policy statements put out by your umbrella group

Have other early childhood groups in the area been contacted to work together on this?

Is advisory help available? from whom?

Is there a cost involved in planning and writing the policy statement?

Reporting to Ministry on accounting procedures used

Is this part of a job description for the centre manager, president, administrator or treasurer?

Has someone responsibility for deciding on accounting procedures used?

Have other early childhood groups and centres been contacted to share information and ideas?

Plan of stages towards quality staffing ratios

Does the centre need to work towards quality staffing ratios?

Will these be improved when new budget monies are available?
Has a decision been made on time involved?

Will there be a commitment to employing a staff member with a view to enrolment in field-based training or other training?

Will there be a commitment to including additional trained staff?

Has someone responsibility for calculating-
a) levels of staffing required, b) costs involved, c) time-span

Should options be explored such as employing cleaner/cook or using voluntary or after-school help in routine or administrative areas?

Is there a cost involved in developing a plan, e.g. paid professional consultant to decide on quality staff ratio?

Are relevant resources such as books available?
(as listed in the **Early Childhood Management Handbook** *Section 4* page 49 and at the end of this book.)

Staffing Schedules

Is there a staffing schedule showing rostered duties?

Does this show qualifications of staff and ages when on duty?

Does it show a qualified person on duty at all times (including sleeping and eating times)?

Training Plan

(where untrained staff are employed)

Is there budget provision for enrolling untrained staff in programmes?

Is there a policy on paying or reimbursing course fees or part fees for staff or parents?

Is there a time allocation by other staff or parents for support assistance to trainees?

Has money, e.g. relief staffing time, been allocated for training?

Is there a plan to replace untrained staff with trained staff?

Have costs for each option (e.g. training or replacing staff) been analysed?

Has a staged plan of action been drawn up for the provision of continuing training of personnel?

Have you identified your advisory Service?

Has your centre identified your local Early Childhood Development Unit District Office as your advisory office, if applicable?

Is your group or centre affiliated to a national organisation such as The New Zealand Kindergarten Union, the New Zealand Childcare Association, The New Zealand Playcentre Federation, Barnardos etc.

Are membership costs budgeted where applicable ?

Are sufficient copies of your advisory service's material such as the newsletter, magazine available to management, parents and staff?

Has the cost of this, including meetings, use of speakers, visits by members to other centres, etc been included in the budget? (e.g. travel expenses for parents too)

Have people from your advisory service been asked to visit and how was this done?

Have costs been discussed ?

Are you in touch with other early childhood groups similar to yours in the local area?

Have you identified any other advisory and support facilities or groups operating in your district that could be of use to you ?

Do you know where to go for information about in-service training?

Has management, parents and staff identified areas for in-service training priorities ?

Has in-service training been discussed with Early Childhood Development Unit District Co-ordinators or other centres in your district ?

Is there information available to staff, management and parents on options for inservice training and management development, including sources of courses and trainers on a local, regional and national level as well as correspondence courses.

Is there action needed in drawing up a plan, if so, who is responsible ?

Has a budget been set for the costs of in-service and management development training relief days for management, parents and staff?

(In-service teacher relief days are only available from the Early Childhood Development Unit for their workshops and courses)

Programme of inspection for buildings, grounds and equipment

Is there a regular programme for safety checks?

How is it recorded?

How are any needs for repairs or maintenance requirements actioned?

Only chartered centres may receive bulk funding through the Ministry of Education.

Charter Process:

6 Preparing to write your Charter

Using the information from the checklists, and cross referencing with the Early Childhood Management Handbook list out what needs to be done for each category under the following three headings:

Action required
(e.g. plans need to be developed, centre needs to be reorganised etc)

Additional budget cost involved
(note if this is either or both an immediate cost or forward planning)

Person to take responsibility for dealing with any action required.

Use this information under your framework heading to:

Organise the tasks required for developing and writing the charter
Identify budget costs over and above present centre or group expenses
Delegate responsibility for areas to be organised in your centre or group
Identify areas for future development.

Deciding what decisions need to be made and what information is needed is a preparation for charter writing

7 Budgeting and management planning

Centres will have to decide how they will spend their budget, within charter guidelines.

This chapter has:

* The accountability procedures you have to follow
* A three step budget planning programme
  - Determining priorities
  - Bulk funding formula and other funding considerations
  - Determining your budget

The accountability procedures

The accountability procedures required in order to gain this funding are :

Evidence of forward planning and information on the methods to be used to meet these goals.
Budgets based on reasoned and fair use of funding
Evidence to show that on-going steps are being taken to meet objectives.
Clear records of income and expenditure for all money received from Government

These are the questions your group or centre will need to answer -

What is funding needed for?

How will it be done with the money available?

Are all needs being taken into account in planning?

How was the funding used?

Budget planning - Step One:
Determining priorities

Most early childhood groups applying for charter status are already in operation and will have had experience of planning and preparing budgets because they have had to meet minimum standards.

This section gives strategies for incorporating charter requirements and determining priorities for action and development.

Before the budget is drawn up it is necessary to list out the assumptions on which it is based.

This involves making decisions and choosing options about the way in which your group will operate and the guidelines you will use in decision making.

Early childhood groups at charter-readiness status will have done this informally already but in order to show that charter requirements are met - and to make decision making simpler, it is worth doing this in written form.

Note that much of the following has been written with childcare centres in mind. Some groups may not have to consider the staffing financial requirements, in such detail or from this particular perspective.

Decisions may have to be made on:

Administration and Management

Is the centre owner, manager or committee, the administrator of the centre ?
Is this a voluntary or a paid position?

What work will be involved? Will the work be a mixture of working with children and administrative duties or straight administrator, or director-supervisor?

What is a fair salary for the job?
(i.e. one which is comparative with other staff and which reflects the responsibilities of the position)
or does your group have strong feelings about the voluntary component?

What are the costs involved in trained staff carrying out basic administrative or cleaning functions? Are there other, less expensive alternatives such as teenagers or a local community member to do weekly centre cleaning, employing part-time clerical help, or using a computer system?

Does the committee work involve skilled tasks, e.g. budget manager?
Is that workload going to increase ?

Book-keeping and Accounting

Look at question of voluntary treasurer versus paid book-keeper.
Consider the different options available.

What experience and qualifications should the person responsible have and how much time would be involved?

What ways might there be of working with other early childhood groups and centres in your area to share administrative, accounting costs? This might include exploring the possibility of renting or buying computer time and or software for administrative and financial record keeping, shared use of an accountant etc

To make decisions, consult your district office of the Early Childhood Development Unit or your umbrella organisation for the reference books mentioned in the bibliography.

Calculate the cost of your preferred option.

Staff ratios

Look at the recommended staffing ratios and if your centre or group does not reach these, decide how you will work towards this goal.

Review your policy on wage rates for staff and staff responsibilities. Look at conditions of service, including leave provision.

Estimate the salaries required for your preferred options.

Or plan for necessary reimbursement and petty cash for parents, management and staff.

Staff and Adult education and development

How much time will be allowed for staff and adults (e.g. parents in training), education and development per year.

How many programme planning or administrative meetings will be budgeted so staff may be included where necessary?

What type of courses and workshops are needed and what are the limits on costs? This may involve a decision of areas of particular focus for the year, such as Treaty of Waitangi, Taha Maori, curriculum areas, human relations, centre management etc. Some workshops on curriculum subjects could take place during sessions.

Make general decisions if you wish as to the types of course which would qualify for assistance from centre funding,

e.g Teacher Refresher Courses or those available from other organisations.

Estimate the cost of such an in-service course of 7 days to decide whether the cost of a course for a selected staff member could be subsidised or paid for annually.

You may need to consider priority areas nationally or for your particular centre

e.g. bicultural perspectives, equity issues or building up expertise about including differently abled children and children with English as a second language (ESL) in your programme.

Decide on a budget amount to cover the cost of membership for management, parents and staff (if applicable) of your or their umbrella organisations as well as other news-letters or professional journals, books.

Weigh up the experience and background of staff and adults as well as the special needs of the centre

(e.g. number of babies, ethnic background of families, areas identified as important or in need of improvement)

before making a decision.

Adult and Staff training

What training courses should people, parents, parents as staff or staff undertake, and how many should be involved?

Beware of the balance for on going training and encouraging new people to participate in a training programme.

Remember: top up training requirements may be a necessity for your group or centre and all extra training will improve the quality of your centre.

Find out time required for training and estimate the amount of relief time that may be needed.

Look at the amount of time involved in correspondence courses (Advanced Studies for Teachers Unit) and cost out relief time for staff during work hours for this or take into consideration the commitment of all your personnel.

What training costs should the centre pay - all, some, reimbursement on condition course is completed?

Look at a policy on supporting trainees with books and materials, whether through library resources or book purchases and subsidies.

Consider child minding; whether it is shared care or financial reimbursement.

Remember that taking these considerations into account can also help with the smooth running of the centre.

The Early Childhood Education Development Unit recommends strongly that centres, who have a commitment to increase the number of trained staff, should give both funding and support to training.

Staff relief options

What options will be used to replace staff or adults on training or undertaking development courses?

Relief staff, use of voluntary or parent helpers, negotiated extra time or the reorganisation of rosters?

Calculate and set aside funding as per staff, per meeting or course, for relief procedures to take advantage of in-service or training courses during the year.

What policy will be used to cover staff during lunch-breaks to ensure ratios are maintained?

This might be a general increase in staff numbers, additional relief staff over the mid-day period, manager or administrator spending a proportion of time involved with children, use of parents and community volunteers to maintain a community base.

Maintenance and upgrading

Before looking at specific needs of your centre or group for equipment or redevelopment, decide on the amount that you estimate this would cost per year.

Decide on a further amount for maintenance and repairs.

Look at any immediate needs, as, for example, the need to install ramps, a wide-door toilet etc for disabled children and cost this out.

Resources for play and learning and parent resources

Estimate an amount to cover on-going costs of materials for play such as dough, collage, paper, crayons. clay, nails and wood, sand etc.

Decide on an amount to cover parent education resources including meetings for parents, newsletters, pamphlets and parenting books .

Recording and Evaluating

Look at the time required to complete evaluations and records for charter review.

Decide on the amount of time to be given to this, who should do the work, calculate the cost of any relief time or additional staff time required.

Fees and parent involvement

Review the fee structure of your centre and decide on a general principle as regards lowering or raising fees.

Calculate a budget amount for consultation meetings and reporting to parents both in the initial consultation process for charter development and as an on-going cost for reviewing, reporting and evaluating your centre.

Conditions and times of opening for your centre

You may need to review your centre's or groups times of opening and the number of weeks your centre or group will be in operation, but changes must be reported to the Ministry.

Review and cost out policies on such things as meals provided, nappy service, parent contributions and involvement.

Review and confirm number and ages of children attending.

Special policies

Review your policies and calculate the cost of specific areas unique to your centre.

Parent participation on working bees and maintenance or financial payment. Parents' role at sessions.

Laundry and nappy services, meals, outings and trips etc.

Rent, mortgage and other costs

Estimate the fixed costs such as rent or mortgage repayments, electricity, telephone, heating.

Remember that the bulk funding from Government is not intended to cover all the centre's costs. Parents' fees, Department of Social Welfare subsidies, voluntary contributions and fund raising will still be required in order to budget effectively.

Budget Planning - Step Two:

Available funding

When you have made decisions on and costed budget assumptions for your centre or group calculate:

What your bulk funding grant will be
What other monies will be available,
e.g. from fees, voluntary contributions or grants, fund-raising etc.

Bulk Funding Formula

Any bulk grant funding criteria and formula changes may be updated by new guidelines from the Ministry of Education.
There will be two ways of calculating the bulk grant. You will choose which method is more appropriate for your particular centre.
You should not move from one option to the other.

Sessional formula

Where sessions are clearly defined, the following procedure may be followed:

i) a session is defined as a two and a half to three hour period.

ii) no more than 2 sessions per child may be claimed in any day.

iii) no more than 10 sessions per child may be claimed in any week.

iv) the number of child-sessions is calculated by adding up the number of children enrolled for each session.

(NB the word "enrolled" means that the child is either present, or would normally be present at the session. It should not be muddled with attendance which refers to the children actually present at a certain time)

Hourly formula

If children are attending for different periods of time, and a varied number of days, the hourly formula may work for you. Information on calculations is available from Ministry of Education District Liaison Offices.

Sessional rates

There are two sessional rates -

Under 2 years - $21.75 per child-session which is equivalent to $7.25 per hour for a 3 hour session

Over 2s - $6.75 per child session, which is equivalent to $2.25 per hour for a 3 hour session.

This funding is available to all licensed centres until 1 July 1990 and after this to chartered services only.

Sessional rates will be increased by a staged plan to 1994.

The sessional rate for under-twos will stay the same at $21.75,

This applies only to under-twos who attend a centre without parents being present.

Other funding

The bulk grant is not intended to cover all centre costs. Fees, fund-raising and other grants or subsidies will all be needed to ensure the effective running of your centre.

There is no bar to your early childhood group receiving funding from other sources - this will not reduce the funding you receive from your bulk, together with all funding received from Government

The review process is designed to ensure that early childhood groups and centres are using Government funding fairly and equitably to meet their charter objectives and all funding will be taken into account in this review.

Budget Planning - Step Three:
Determining your budget

The next step is to consider the options for planning and management of the budget and to draw up a budget for the coming year together with a projected budget.

The decision as to whether your centre or group will have a voluntary or paid treasurer or accountant will already have been made.

Before taking the final step of putting the pieces together, brainstorm questions you feel you need to know the answers of. This exercise is particularly important if using a consultant for advice.

Asking questions

Knowing what questions to ask is an important factor in getting the help and advice you need.

Some of the most commonly asked questions are technical ones -

" How many bank accounts should I have?"
" How do you set up an accounts ledger?"
" How should wages be paid out?"
" What ACC class is your early childhood centre ?
" When is the end of the financial year?"
" How do you fill in GST?"
" Should I keep budgets and cash flow on a daily basis?"

Others relate to effective and useful systems of record keeping

"What's a good system to keep records of fees and daily hours children attend?"
"Should there also be a monthly record of money received and expended?"

Finding information

The most valuable sources of information are people with experience and expertise in early childhood centre management.

Your umbrella organisations, other local early childhood groups, community business people, and the Early Childhood Development Unit should all be able to help.

See resource list too.

Charter Process:

7. Budget and Management Planning

List out all the budget assumptions which will underpin your budget plan

Put an estimated or calculated cost against each one

List out all development costs required both for the coming year,
e.g. charter consultation, and for the next three years,
e.g. training, staff salaries for qualified staff, Treaty of Waitangi staff training.

Prepare your budget, taking into account the charter requirements

Compare this with your projected income

Make choices where necessary, based on your previously decided priorities

Make decisions on appropriate record keeping strategies

Use this information to:

Action the priorities and needs already decided for your group or centre

Develop strategies for effective accounting and budget management

Keep files on methods used and reasons for choices

Have a sound decision making base for use in management

Both short term and long term budgets are part of the charter requirements.
Initial planning is the key to success.

8 Settling differences, Resolving conflicts

The consultative process will provide centre management with ideas to help in charter development but it may also highlight differences of opinion.

This chapter has :

Procedures for settling differences

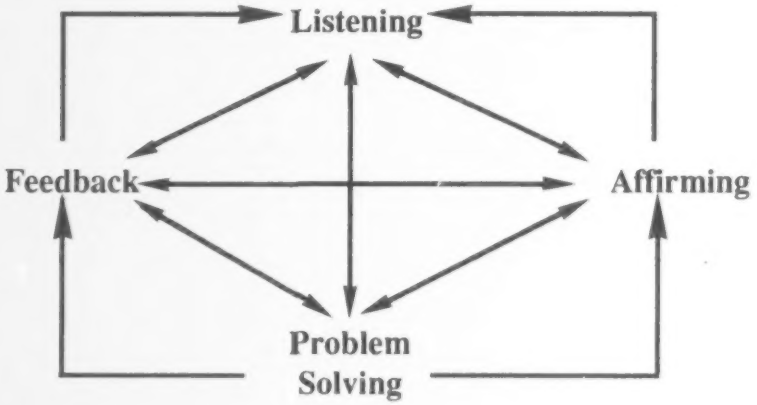
A flow chart

Some of the differences may be in attitude but others will have implications for the organisation of your early childhood group or centre.

Differences of opinion and conflict situations are part of the experience of all early childhood groups. *(Early Childhood Management Handbook, Section 4 page 29)*

A strategy for dealing with these are required as part of the charter management plan.

The diagram below illustrates a helpful model to keep in mind:



Procedures for dealing with conflict and settling differences

A number of points need to be taken into account in developing procedures for resolving grievances, differences and conflicts.

1 Is there already a decision making process to be used?

Organisations often assume but do not write down the process they use to arrive at decisions. This process may not always be well understood.

In some early childhood groups decisions may be made in a haphazard way depending on circumstances and people involved so it sometimes helps to:

Write down or plan the consultative process to be used before decisions are taken. This may be the owner or management committee consulting with staff, preliminary discussion at a management or staff meeting, taking outside advice or use some of the procedure listed in the chapter about consultation.

Make sure there is a procedure to follow for anyone not happy with a decision. This may involve discussion of grievances at a management meeting or by a small committee, by an advisory group, or by an outside consultant.

Ensure that there are known procedures for parents to follow if they have a complaint or grievance.

2 Is the decision making process understood and agreed to?

Write out the process and circulate it to everybody involved whether they are involved as management, staff and parents. Everyone should be clear on what to do when there is a problem.

Use a flowchart, a form to be filled in or a box or book for people to make known their worries and stress that this is an o.k. thing to do.

Try to reassure people

e.g. *"No-one can be perfect - if you have a worry let us know"* ,

"Listening includes hearing the worries as well as the praises. If you have a problem or disagree with something that happens in this centre this is what you should do --"

3 Know when to listen and when to act

There are two important stages in conflict resolution.

Understanding the problem

Dealing with the problem.

Make it clear which stage is being dealt with. Don't feel that a decision has to be made immediately.

Use this strategy for dealing with problems

Record the point of difference or conflict

Discuss it individually or in a group with all those most involved. Where two staff, parent and staff member or a group of parents are involved, spend time talking about the incident with both individuals separately and together.

Take time to investigate it coolly.

Say *"I am going to sleep on this"* or, *"I will get back to you very soon"*. Give a time when you will do this. Even if this is half an hour, that may be important to get the problem into perspective.

Look for reasons on which to base a decision.

Read through the next section on evaluation carefully. This is a way of getting information to help you make decisions. It can be very useful tool for resolving conflict.

4 Who makes the final decisions?

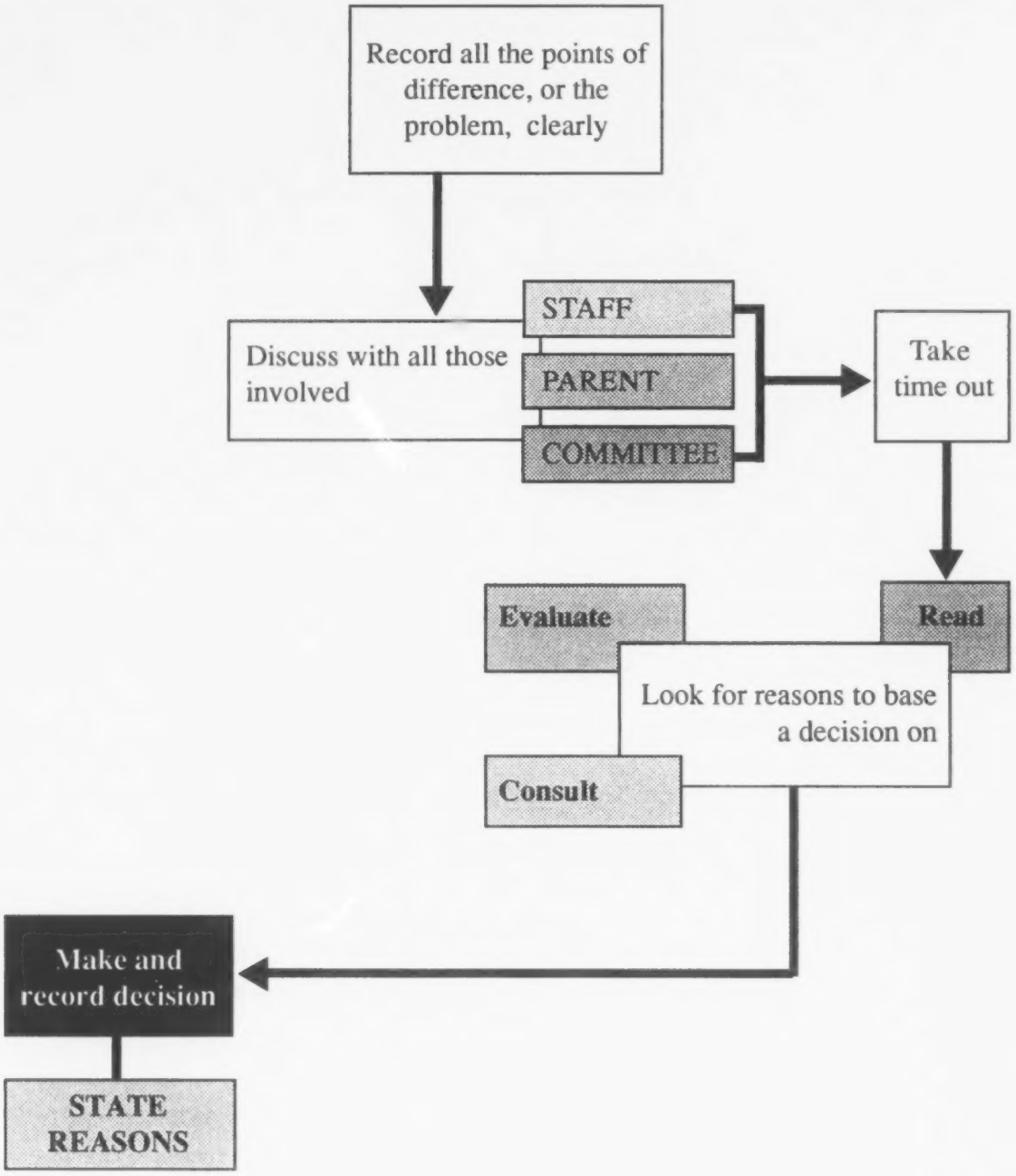
In the end, someone has to break any deadlocks. Where there are two fundamental points of view, who has the final say?

Decide who is the person or group with this responsibility.

It may be all the parents, the centre owner, a management committee, a management committee plus centre supervisor, or the sponsoring body e.g. church, charitable or educational organisation.

* It may need to be someone who is not directly connected to the centre
* Umbrella organisations should be approached first.
* Early Childhood Development Unit Co-ordinators are available for help and advice.

Flow chart for use in settling differences or grievances



Charter Licensing Process

8. Settling Differences, Resolving Conflict

Using the information from this section to-

Make a reference list of ways to get further information through evaluation or consulting to help decision making

Decide on procedures as applicable for use in parents' grievances, the consulting process, settling staff conflicts, or management decision making

Decide who has final responsibility for decisions in each case

Any budget costs required

Use this information to:

Develop a plan for settling differences of opinion in the consultation process.

Organising procedures dealing with grievances and for resolving conflict

Identify budget costs over and above present centre or group expenses

Delegate responsibility for developing and recording procedures

Develop resources on group procedures, management skills

Diversity is part of the vitality of early childhood education. Differences can be resolved when they are accepted as positive.

9 Writing the Charter Document

The format of this book has been closely geared to the requirements for charters as set out in the Early Childhood Management Handbook.

Each section has been designed to give you information and background which will be used for the task of writing the charter document. Now you should be ready to write your charter.

This chapter has :

Simple directions on charter writing

Examples of Objectives

Where to go for extra help

Writing Your Charter :

The charter does not have to be a very long document but you must be able to show the evidence of what has gone before as to consultation with management, parents and staff.
This shows the importance of filing all that has gone before as suggested in the licensing and charter process charts.

The Charter:

* must have a written policy on management practices for each of the categories of the standard requirements:

The Learner - Curriculum and Programme
Special Needs
Health Safety and Environment
Relationships with Parents/Whanau
Treaty of Waitangi
Equity
Management
Staffing
Staff development and Advisory Support
Land and Buildings

*Note that rather than copying out the **Principles** and **Requirements** for each category these could be photocopied from the Early Childhood Management Handbook and the centres or groups own particular policy decisions will be written in their **management plan**.*

The charter:

Will be a written summary of all the work you did as you worked through *Chapter 6 From Licensing to Charter.*

Can include policy statements from umbrella organisations on management of centre, staffing, Treaty of Waitangi, equity issues, work with parents and whanau and children with special developmental needs.
There must be acknowledgement of these statements in the charter document providing that these are expanded by statements which are particular to each centre.
(Early Childhood Management Handbook, Section 3, Charter, page 4)

Can have objectives that are, specific, measurable, and time bound

Must hold to the paramount principles for early childhood education as set out
(Early Childhood Management Handbook Section 3, page 6)

Must hold to the principles relating to the learner, the curriculum, and the programme as set out *(Early Childhood Management Handbook, Section 4, pages 6-15)*

An example of how the New Zealand Childcare Association (who originally produced this book) saw the use of policy statements as they relate to management is set out in Appendix 1 of this book.

Any changes made in your document after it has been signed must be forwarded to the Ministry.

Your charter will most likely require another visit from the Ministry liaison officers over and above the one you have already had for licensing.

Written Objective Examples :

Equity

The principle in the Early Childhood Management Handbook *(Section 3, Charter, page 16)* says -

'Equitable practices will be an intregal part of the administration and operation of all early childhood services.'

Further principles are: *(Section 4 , Charter Guide, page 34 :)*

'Equitable practices are practices that will be fair to everyone regardless of race, gender, ability, religion or belief and socioeconomic backgrounds;
Every child will have the opportunity to develop its abilities to an optimun level;
Equity means that some may require more or different resources than others if they are to make the same progress.'

Your Aim may be - To create a programme which reflects different cultures

Your Written Objective may be - To spend up to $50.00 a month during the year on musical tapes, resources and books which reflect other cultures, with a particular emphasis on providing more material that reflects the numbers of Cook Island children in our centre.

Aim: All children, irrespective of gender, will be encouraged to learn and play in all curriculum areas.

Objective: The supervisor to do weekly observations for at least one hour recording children playing in an area of play

-Areas to be covered in rotation.
-Information to be shared at the weekly staff meetings and be used for planning weekly emphasis of play activities.

Aim: Programmes and resources will actively promote non-sexist and non-racist behaviour and language by children, parents and staff.

Objectives:

-By October 31st, every member of staff will have participated in at least one course about non-sexist behaviour and language.
-All staff are asked to notice any incidents of sexist or racist remarks by children and pattern to the child acceptable remarks and positive attitudes.
-Records of the number of these incidents to be reported at staff meetings and recorded in the minutes.

Support available

In writing the charter document several other sources of support already mentioned are available to centres.

The Early Childhood Development Unit

Funding has been given by Government to develop Management Development training for Management Committees. The Early Childhood Development Unit is responsible for developing and providing this. The training is available in all areas for parents, staff and management of all early childhood centres, groups and home based schemes.

Ministry of Education District Offices

Liaison Officers in the District Offices of the Ministry of Education will have responsibility for licensing and negotiating early childhood centres, groups and home based schemes, final charter document. They will have information and expertise on the charter requirements, including any changes, and will work with centres and groups to approve their charters.

Early Childhood Advisory Services

Many early childhood groups have their own advisory support services such as Playcentre Liaison Officers or Centre Advisors Kindergarten Senior Teachers, Barnardos Co-ordinators, Community Childcare and NZCA Advisers.

A free flow of information and resources between services will strengthen and assist all early childhood centres and groups.

The Early Childhood Development Unit provides a consultancy service to all early childhood services.

Other resources

Are also listed in the Early Childhood Management Handbook.

Charter Licensing Process

9. Writing your Charter

Plan your charter document under specified headings using the information available

Include both policy statements and information on the way in which your centre will put these into practice.

Discuss your document with Ministry of Education Liaison Officers to show how your centre meets minimum standards and is working towards quality standards.

Your charter does not have to be wordy. The evidence you provide on the consultation process is important and will be the basis for what you write

Use this information to:

Develop a charter on which your centre can be reviewed annually

Set a management plan for your centre to follow

Provide all adults with guidelines on your centre policies

Provide a basis for on-going review and evaluation of progress

Writing the charter document is a statement of intent and a development plan for the future.

10 Evaluation and Review

This chapter has:

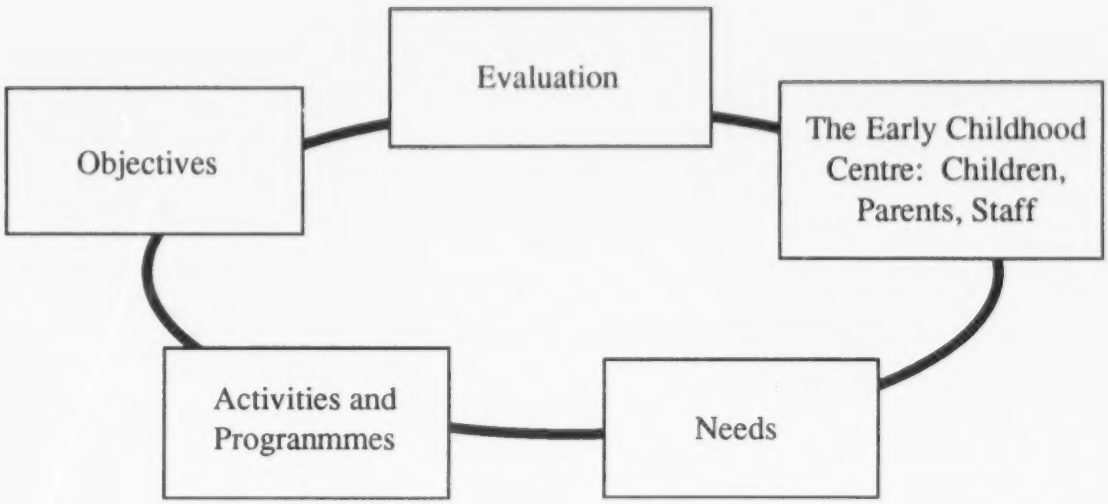
A chart

Getting information

Using information

Continuing evaluation

Evaluation is a natural part of the charter development cycle.



Management plans require early childhood groups and centres to say both **what** they are doing and plan to do and **how** they will do it.

Evaluation is a method of looking at information about your group's operations and making reasoned choices based on this.

Annual reviews will take place

Charters will be renegotiated with the Ministry every five years and your evaluation and review procedures will prepare you for this.

Getting information

The charter development process used in this book will have given you information about the priorities of all adults whether they be parents, staff and management,and the needs and areas of strength you already have.

Observations of session activities or individual children can be planned for.

Diary observations and descriptions about children, centre activities and organisation will give on-going information.

All group, centre and sessional records such as attendance and enrolment forms, accounts, staff rosters etc. are a valuable source of information.

Using information

A golden rule is to always use evaluation for a specific purpose not just because you wonder how things are getting on.
The atmosphere and aroha of your group will be felt without the need for evaluation but to move ahead and still retain the things which make it 'tick' needs planning. Planning should be based on facts as well as feelings.

Decide on the reasons for evaluating, and ask basic, simple questions. The answers will help your group change to better meet needs. Some examples of reasons are :

To help improve the daily programme:

How many children use the book corner? Are they mostly girls, or boys?

Which outdoor equipment is used most?

To help adults work successfully with children

How many times did you say "no or stop that" over the day?

Who started the conversations between adults and the children?

What proportion of quality time do adults spend with children, how much in cleaning, or disciplining?

To encourage parents to understand how children learn

How many different ideas did a child introduce during family play?

Does my child understand the difference between colours, shapes and sizes?

How did these children solve the problem of getting the cart through the doorway?

To help children with special needs

How much language does this child understand?

What skills in communicating with others has this child acquired over the week?

What physical skills does this child have?

To help solve conflicts

The use of evaluation was touched on in the section on settling differences and resolving conflict.

What factors are involved in this?

What could be the reasons behind this difference of opinion?

Is there enough information available on which to base a decision?

An example

Sunnyfield Centre has had a tradition of a group story reading session to end the day.

A new adult working during sessions finds the group of 20 children very difficult to control. She feels confident of her abilities and suggests that the group time is not an appropriate way for young children to learn

An older person disagrees. She agrees she has been using more control than usual but blames the new person for unsettling the children. She enjoys the sessions.

Research information about young children tells us that :

Young children learn most easily in a one to one or small group situation
Children usually begin to enjoy playing and being part of a group when they approach the four- five years old stage of growth.
Children are settled when they know the adults and the centre

Information from the people in charge tells us that:

The centre has used group sessions successfully in the past
Both adults are competent, and both report some difficulties
One of the adults is newer to the centre. She reports most difficulties.

Information from centre records was added to this. It showed that:

There were 8 children at the centre who were new that term
There were 9 children under two and a half
There were 3 children with English as a second language
One child was diagnosed as being extremely over active.

Instead of a confrontation between two workers the evaluation showed that the centre had a higher than usual proportion of very young children and children with difficulties in understanding or concentrating. It also showed that a nearly half the children had not been at the centre for very long.

The supervisor was able to use this information to reach a compromise. The group session was retained but it became a music and movement session, more suited to the younger age group. In addition a further adult was rostered in to participate in the session and a range of activities was introduced for children who wished to leave the group to read, play outside or take part in creative play activities.

Developing Evaluation Skills

The example given on the previous page can be used as an outline for problem-solving. However in order for a centre to feel confident and at ease with evaluation, training and resources on evaluation techniques are needed.

Include evaluation as an in-service topic for people who work in the centre
Set aside time for adults to practice observing and evaluating. Try to set up a cycle of things which you need information about.
Use simple techniques.
Remember to use individual records and diary information as well as observations.
Bring in advisers and others to assist in generating questions for evaluation and for carrying out evaluations. Budget for this.
Record results carefully.
Get in the habit of actioning changes on the basis of solid information.

Instead of "She's a real pest, let's try ignoring her''.
Observe her behaviour to see exactly how often she is disruptive, when it happens, where, and who is involved.

Instead of "The outside equipment is dreadfully tatty, let's get something more up to date''.
Ask for an observation of what children play on, for how long, and how they use the equipment.

Instead of ''We have to have an educational programme. The children have to sit and learn their colours this week''.
Ask what is meant by the words ''educational programme''.
Ask what children know about colours - can they differentiate between shades? Ask what children need to know.
Look at what they are learning from everyday activities.

Appropriate records of all discussions, observations and information about what happens in the centre should be kept for future reference.

Charter Licensing Process

10. Evaluation and Review

List methods which your centre could use to evaluate activities as required

Develop a file of areas where regular evaluation may be required

Develop plans for in-service training and advisory support to assist in evaluation.

Use this information to:

Develop skills and expertise in evaluation methods

Monitor and review the development plans for your centre

Resolve conflicts and areas of disagreement

Identify the reasons for behaviour patterns or problems

Understanding and using evaluation procedures is a vital part of the charter development process

Appendix 1

Policy statements; New Zealand Childcare Association

The NZCA has a number of policy statements, including a set of aims and ethics for childcare, developed by childcare practitioners and advisors, which can be used by members as a base for writing their management plan.

For a complete booklet of policy statements, write to the NZCA.

> NB Acknowledgement should be made that these are NZCA policy statements in your charter document and these could only apply to centres affiliated to the New Zealand Childcare Association

Management of Behaviour

A code of ethics should be observed in matters relating to confidentiality, impartiality, tolerance and discipline, bearing in mind responsibilities entrusted to childcare workers as professional care-givers.

Discipline needs to be tempered with much love and understanding while administered in a firm and consistent manner. Young children need guidelines and acceptable limits within which they are free to make decisions. The NZCA does not condone smacking.

The Learner - Curriculum and Programme

It is the right of every child to be provided with quality care which shall include love, acceptance, respect and stimulation to grow and develop to his or her full potential.

A quality childcare service is complementary to family life, providing:

a) a caring and stimulating environment for children
b) free access for parents to observe, participate and share in the management of their children's care and education
c) a group fostering favourable interaction between adults and children.

Planning, programme and discipline should promote non-violence and co-operation.

Programmes should offer a full range of indoor and outdoor play and activities which encourage the total development of the child.
Programmes should be designed to be responsive to children's initiatives and to the changing environment.

Special developmental needs

Each child should be treated as an individual with support for his or her special developmental needs (also applies to section above).

There should be in-service training opportunities for workers currently in the field.

Consultation meetings with parents, staff and the relevant professional services should be held before the child is placed and there should be on-going consultation during the placement so that the needs of all involved are able to be met. It is important that parents should be part of the consultation team as of right and that they are an equal partner in the planning and decision making team.

Dissemination of information about local contacts for every area is important so that people working with special developmental needs children are aware of the avenues of assistance available to them.

Routines and Safety

The health, education and welfare of children are of equal importance.

Indoor and Outdoor Play

Programmes should offer a full range of indoor and outdoor play and activities which encourage the total development of the child.

Programmes should be designed to be responsive to children's initiatives and to the changing environment.

All programmes should have a full range of good quality equipment *(see NZCA Equipment List for Childcare Centres)*, kept in good order and condition and fully available to children.

Involving Parents and Whanau

Each child or parent should receive support for his or her special needs.

All matters pertaining to children, parents and staff should be treated in a confidential manner

Parents have the following basic rights in any centre:

a) Honest and objective information about their child's programme, development and routines in the centre

b) Clear channels of communication (as part of the information to parents) to present concerns about their child or the centre

c) Information about their rights to contact the Ministry of Education in relation to concerns about the centre.

Parents must have free access to observe, participate and share in their children's care and education.

Parents elected or co-opted to manage centres should all be reimbursed, not just those in the paid workforce who lose income.

Treaty of Waitangi

Childcare services should reflect the bicultural nature of New Zealand society

The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi should be used as the basis for the development of bicultural policies and programmes by the NZCA.

Centre staff who have accepted responsibility for the Maori programmes in the centre need to be provided with support.

Equity

NZCA members should be encouraged to develop in childcare services an awareness and understanding of the multicultural nature of NZ society.

Childcare staff should be sensitive to differences in race, sex, religion and political beliefs.

There should be no discrimination on account of race, colour, sex, language, religious, political or other belief, of either parent or child. It is, however, possible for individual cultural groups to provide programmes which are open to members of other cultures.

Management Policies

The principles of parent and worker participation in the education of children and therefore in the management of learning institutions is supported. Centres should have a management structure incorporating parent and worker representatives.

Qualified, competent and suitably recompensed staff are essential for quality childcare

Ratios for children under one year should be 1:2.

For children one to two and a half years, 1:4

Increased equipment should be available for centres who have under one year olds.

Advisory and Support service

Exchange schemes between staff in early childhood centres should be encouraged.

It is important that people advising childcare services should have childcare experience or expertise.

In-service training is a vital component of quality childcare and on-going opportunities for this must be plentiful.

Staffing

Centres with staff enrolled in field-based training should :

- pay training fees for trainees
- pay day release even if the training day falls on a day when the trainee is
- employ relievers for the time the trainee is away from the centre
- provide paid time for trainees to carry out observations and assignments
- provide paid study time (including time for correspondence students)

Field-based training, which enables the participation of a much wider range of people in childcare, including people with family or other commitments who could not attend Teachers College, and people who are not comfortable with an institutional setting has real value. This results in a service staffed by people of a similar background to the community the centre services. It also allows programmes to remain flexible and innovative.

Childcare staff should observe a code of ethics in matters relating to confidentiality, impartiality, tolerance and discipline, bearing in mind the objects of the NZCA and the responsibilities that have been entrusted to them as professional care-givers.

Childcare staff should be paid on a professional basis commensurate with their abilities and qualifications.

Staff should have regular refreshment breaks, opportunities to pursue training opportunities, regular staff meetings, and conditions which ensure a high standard of professionalism and efficiency.

All staff should have specialised training in infant care and there should be regular in-service and refresher training for staff working with infants

Appendix 2

USEFUL RESOURCES AND BOOKS

This is only a basic list that relates directly to the chartering process. There is a wide range of other books on curriculum and programmes available from local education organisations and government agencies and libraries.

Administration and Budgeting

The Management of Community-Based Childcare Services.
Available from: Wellington Community Childcare Association, Box 6437, Wellington.

Money, Money, Money, How Will We Spend it All?,
by Crispin Gardiner. Available from NZCA, Box 3402, Wellington.

The NZCA Management Handbook for Childcare Centres
Early Childhood Development Unit purchased from New Zealand Childcare Assoc. the publishing rights for this book.
The Unit intends to broaden and revise all sections of the book to include all early childhood education.
At present sections on ***Staff Management, Running Your Centre*** and ***Finance*** are available separately for $7 (gst, p&p incl) or $18 (gst, p&p incl) for the 3 sections from ECDU, National Office, Box 12 465 Thorndon, Wellington

Consultation and Problem Solving

Getting Started on Consultation, 1989 and
Guidelines for Successful Consultation, 1990.
These two books written for schools and Boards of Trustees are available from Learning Media, Ministry of Education, Box 3293, Wellington.

A Guide to Consensus 1990.
A leaflet about consensus decision-making available from ECDU, National Office, Box 12 465, Wellington.

Working in a Group
Available for $3.30 (+p&p) from New Zealand Playcentre Federation, Publications, Box 15 886, New Lynn, Auckland or your local Playcentre Equipment Depot.

Evaluation and Review

Once Upon a Time Among Blocks and Car Cases by Anne Meade;
Observation by Bruce McMillan; and
Early Childhood Portfolios

All available from New Zealand Council Educational Research, Education House, 178 Willis Street, Wellington.

Cultural Perspectives

Advice for Early Childhood Management on the Early Childhood Charter and the Treaty of Waitangi.

A handout sheet available from your local Early Childhood District office.

Treaty of Waitangi - Resource Kit.

Available for $35 (gst p&p incl) from ECDU National Office, Box 12 465 Thorndon, Wellington.

Talking Past Each Other by Joan Metge and Patricia Kinloch.

Available from Government Print Bookshop, Box 12 411, Wellington.

Special Developmental Needs

Meeting the Needs of Young Children with Special Developmental Needs

Available free from ECDU National Office, Box 12 465, Wellington.
Send a self-addressed envelope (A4 229mm x 324mm) with an 80c postage stamp for each copy you order.

Special in a Different Way.

Available from NZ Playcentre Publications, Box 15 886, New Lynn, Auckland.

Parents

Parents and Staff, Partners in Childcare

Available from NZCA, Box 3402, Wellington.

Parents at Play workshop ideas for parents.

Available from Canterbury Playcentre Association, Box 8083, Riccarton, Christchurch.

Adult and Staff Training

Contact:

Your local early childhood education organisation.

Advanced Studies for Teachers Unit (ASTU),
c/o Palmerston North Teachers College, Private Bag, Palmerston North.

Colleges of Education in Auckland, Hamilton, Palmerston North, Wellington, Christchurch and Dunedin.

Early Childhood Development Unit district office

Regulations and Acts

Regulations and Acts are available from Government Print Bookshop, Box 12 411, Wellington or Government Print Legislation Service, Box 14 277 Kilbirnie, Wellington.